

REMARKS

Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of this application in view of the foregoing amendments and the following remarks.

CLAIM STATUS

Claims 1-43 are pending in the application and are rejected. Claims 1, 15, 16 and 19 are herein amended.

Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. §103

Claims 1-17 and 19-43 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over U.S. Patent No. 5,905,990 to Inglett ("Inglett") in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,493,713B1 to Kanno ("Kanno"). Claim 18 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. §103(a) as being unpatentable over Inglett in view of Kanno further in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,477,531B1 to Sullivan et al. ("Sullivan").

The invention as recited in claim 1 is characterized, *inter alia*, in that an automatic manhour setting system gives manhour data to target work standards using a database. A "work standard" indicates a certain work unit in the manufacturing process (see, e.g., page 19, lines 15-16). The system of the present invention as claimed, in pertinent part, provides a storage medium storing a database of work standards described by standard expression and manhours respectively corresponding to the standard expressions. The system first performs matching a target work standard with standard expressions in the database and then sets the manhour corresponding to the matched standard expression as the manhour of the target work standard. In addition, the system stores a file of the set manhours of the target work standards.

Contrary to the position taken by the Examiner, neither Inglett nor Kanno even mention manhour or work standard (work unit) in their specification, and it is very clear that an

automatic manhour setting system is not disclosed by them

Moreover, Inglett discloses a database manager for maintaining meta-data (see column 6, line 6 *et seq.*), however, there is no teaching that the meta-data are pairs of standard expressions and corresponding manhours. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that the storage medium of claim 1 is not disclosed or suggested in Inglett.

Kanno neither mentions manhours, nor is the setting means of claim 1 as amended for setting manhours corresponding to target work standard disclosed.

Further , since the setting means is not disclosed, the manhour file means which stores a file of manhours of the target work standards set by said setting means consequently cannot be disclosed by Inglett.

To further clarify at least the foregoing distinctions between cited art and the present invention as claimed, Applicants have herein amended independent claim 1. Applicants respectfully submit that at least these features of the claimed present invention are not contemplated by Inglett and/or Kanno.

Since neither the storage medium, setting means nor manhour file means is disclosed by Inglett or Kanno, Applicants respectfully submit that claim 1 is not anticipated by nor rendered obvious in view of Inglett or Kanno, take individually or in combination.

Claim 18 which associates specific structures with the respective features of apparatus claim 1, claim 19 which is a method claim counterpart to amended apparatus claim 1, and claim 41 which is a computer program storage medium claim counterpart to method claim 19, are believed patentable over Inglett and Kanno for at least similar reasons as for claim 1.

Dependent Claims

Claims 15 and 16 have been amended to correct inadvertent typographical errors in these claims.

Applicants have not independently addressed the rejections of the dependent claims because, as the independent claims from which the dependent claims depend are allowable for at least the reasons discussed *supra*, the dependent claims are allowable for at least similar reasons. Applicants however, reserve the right to address such rejections should such response be necessary and appropriate.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submits that the invention as recited in claims 1-43 as amended herein is neither anticipated by, nor rendered obvious in view of, the cited references Inglett, Kanno and/or Sullivan, taken individually or in combination.

Applicants respectfully submit that claims 1-43 as amended herein are allowable over the prior art of record, taken alone or in combination, and that the respective rejections be withdrawn and that the application hereby placed in condition for allowance which action is earnestly solicited.

CONCLUSION

In view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and allowance of this application.

Applicants believe no fees are required for this Amendment and Request for Reconsideration and that no extension of time is necessary. However, should an extension of time be necessary to render this filing timely, such is hereby petitioned, and the Commissioner is hereby authorized to charge any additional fees which may be required for this paper, or credit any overpayment, to Deposit Account No. 13-4500, Order No. 1232-4671.